

ICCROM...that's an interesting acronym!

Richard J. Cronenberger

Rome will forever feel like home to you. These are the words of Jukka Jokilehto, Chief of the Architectural Conservation Programme of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property, better known as ICCROM.

In 1993, I was fortunate to be one of two representatives from the United States to attend the Architectural Conservation Course. At the conclusion of the 18-week course, I was in total agreement with Mr. Jokilehto.

ICCROM was founded by UNESCO in 1959 as an autonomous, scientific, intergovernmental organization. The task of ICCROM is to contribute to the worldwide conservation and restoration of cultural property by initiating, developing, promoting, and facilitating conditions for such conservation and restoration.

ICCROM is governed by a body of member states which has included the United States since 1971. As of December 1993, there were 90 member states and 125 associate members (public or private nonprofit cultural institutions).

In addition to the Architectural Conservation Course, ICCROM offers two other regular courses: Mural Paintings Conservation and Scientific Principles of Conservation. ICCROM frequently offers short courses on Technology of Stone Conservation, Wood Conservation Technology, Paper Conservation, and Restoration and Rehabilitation of Earthen Architecture to name a few.

The aim of the Architectural Conservation Course (ARC) is to promote an informed approach to the philosophical and technical aspects of architectural conservation, which includes the protection of monuments, buildings, archaeological sites, urban ensembles, rural areas, traditional settlements, and cultural landscapes. The intent of the course is not to teach recipes or to give ready-made answers to all problems in all countries, but to encourage the participants to open their minds to fresh ideas and look for sensitive solutions based on sound conservation theory.

The following principles guide ICCROM's mission:

- (a) collect, study, and circulate information concerned with the scientific, technical, and ethical issues relating to the conservation and restoration of cultural property;
- (b) co-ordinate, stimulate, or institute research by means of assignments entrusted to bodies of experts, international meetings, publications, and exchange of specialists;
- (c) give advice and make recommendations on general or specific questions relating to the conservation and restoration of cultural property;
- (d) promote, develop, and provide training related to the conservation and restoration of cultural property and raise the standards and practice of conservation and restoration work; and
- (e) encourage initiatives that create a better understanding of the conservation and restoration of cultural property.

In a letter to the editor (*CRM*, Vol. 17, No. 5), Robert Bush, Executive Director of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, noted that our international programs issue (*CRM* Vol. 17, No. 3) did not mention ICCROM. The accompanying article by Rick Cronenberger provides readers with a first-hand account of an ICCROM experience, as well as information for future applicants.

The ARC program is subdivided into four broad categories: Definition & Management of Cultural Heritage; Methods of Survey & Analysis; Conservation of Historic Structures & Material; and Management of the Built & Natural Environment.

The first three weeks concentrated on the history and theory of conservation and the International Charters on Conservation. The second three weeks concentrated on structural monitoring, humidity, and bio-deterioration and inventory, recordation, and documentation.

The third session (eight weeks) concentrated on the conservation aspects of material types, including stone, brick, mortars, earthen architecture, porous materials, and architectural finishes. Wood and timber frame buildings were discussed as well as concrete and metal. Laboratory exercises paralleled the materials discussion exposing the participants to simple but effective conservation experiments. The lab section was designed as a low tech, low cost alternative to expensive conservation labs.

Lectures in this section were more technically oriented, particularly the chemical and molecular discussions on porous materials. Italian crystallographer, Giacomo Chiari, presented this subject with humor, grace, and Italian flare, making it one of the most enjoyable topics. The materials lectures were well represented by Americans such as Tony Crosby and Dennis Montagna, NPS historical architects, and Frank Matero, architectural conservator at the University of Pennsylvania.

The final four weeks concentrated on the management of historic towns, gardens, landscapes, and broad urban conservation issues. This is a relatively new emphasis in response to development pressures throughout the world.

In addition to classroom lectures, trips were taken to critique conservation issues first-hand, including visits to Pisa, San Gimignano, and Tivoli. Several Roman restoration projects were evaluated, including work at the Pantheon, Villa Giulia, the Roman Forum, and the highlight, the restoration of Michelangelo's "The Last Judgment" at the Sistine Chapel.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the ARC was the interaction among colleagues from around the world.¹ It is enlightening to discuss resource issues with someone from India and realize that while resources are different in age and significance, similar conservation issues and philosophies apply. It is both comforting and disheartening to learn that we all face the same conservation issues: lack of financial resources, staffing, and increased development pressures on cultural resources.

While the ARC is designed primarily for architects, other professionals are encouraged to attend. The strength of the course comes from viewpoints of the

(Cronenberger—continued on page 30)



Architectural Conservation Course class photo at Ferrara, Italy. The author is in front row, fourth from left.

(Cronenberger—continued from page 29)

other professionals. In addition to the 18 architects, my class included a civil engineer, an artist, an art historian, an art conservation-restorer, an urban planner, and a craftsman. In 1994, Kathleen Fiero, Mesa Verde park archeologist, attended the course.

In addition to the regular course work, each participant was required to conduct individual research to take advantage of the extensive conservation library located at ICCROM as well as the libraries at the University of Rome and other institutions. Several team projects were also required which I enjoyed for the different viewpoints received from participating in a multicultural forum.

During the final week of the course, a trip to Ferrara was made to study urban conservation and review urban planning issues in the Po River delta area. It was the highlight of the course with everyone relaxing and enjoying an extended trip outside of Rome.

Throughout the five-month course, there were several lectures conducted jointly with the other conservation courses, Scientific Principles of Conservation (SPC) and Mural Paintings Conservation (MPC). The different viewpoints toward conservation between the various professions really became apparent. In fact, some of the discussions got blood boiling.

The MPC aims to give conservators/restorers the theoretical and practical knowledge essential for diagnosing the causes of deterioration and selecting the most appropriate methods of conservation and restoration.

The SPC is responsible for the diffusion of knowledge in the field of "science for conservation" and for the development of a scientific approach for the conservation of materials and artifacts. These aims are achieved mainly through training, research, and technical advice.

The three main courses are offered from January to June of each year. Citizens of the United States apply to ICCROM courses through the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation. Applications should be sent to the Council by February 15 of the year preceding that in which the course is held. Applications are evaluated by the Council, ranked in priority order and forwarded to ICCROM for final selection. Notification usually occurs by late August, allowing about four months preparation. While tuition and fees at ICCROM are subsidized by

Since 1966, approximately 181 Americans have taken ICCROM courses, including the following 25 current and former NPS professionals.

Architectural Conservation

Anne E. Grimmer	'71	WASO
Ali Akbar Miri	'75	SERO
Patrick R. Christopher *	'76	GOGA
Marlys Thurber *	'77	SWRO
Thomas E. Solan	'79	DEWA
Randall W. Copeland	'80	DSC
Walter Sedovic *	'83	NCRC
John M. Barrow	'84	SWRO
Michael Taylor*	'87	SWRO
Barbara D. Zook	'87	SWRO
Paul C. Cloyd	'88	DSC
Dennis R. Montagna	'89	MARO
Frank E. Briscoe *	'91	NCRC
Chandler W. McKoy	'92	NCRC
Richard J. Cronenberger	'93	ROMO
Kathy Fiero	'94	MEVE

Murals Painting Conservation

Allen S. Bohnert	'88	SEAC
Judith M. Jacob	'94	NCRC
Brigit Sullivan	'93	NCRC

Preventive Conservation in Museums

Diana Pardue	'84	STLI
--------------	-----	------

Scientific Principles of Conservation

Martin J. Burke	'77	HFC
Toby Raphael	'80	HFC
Brigit Sullivan	'83	NCRC

Stone Conservation

Harold A. La Fleur, Jr.	'76	DSC
Judith M. Jacob	'91	NCRC

Wood Conservation

Alan Levitan	'86	HFC
--------------	-----	-----

* No longer with the NPS

member states, minimal fees are required to cover insurance, study tours, and textbooks. Participants are responsible for funding subsistence during the course and travel to and from Rome. All courses are taught in English with a few lectures involving an interpreter.

For information about ICCROM, contact the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Office of Communications and Publications, Attention ICCROM, The Old Post Office Building, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, #809, Washington, DC 20004; 202-606-8503.

Note

¹ Twenty countries were represented: Canada, India, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Spain, Israel, Pakistan, Germany, Guatemala, Portugal, Romania, United Kingdom, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Peru, Thailand, Mexico, Greece, Kenya, and the United States.

Richard J. Cronenberger is the Regional Historical Architect for the Rocky Mountain Region of the National Park Service. He has worked for the National Park Service for 15 years, beginning his career with the Historic American Buildings Survey. Mr. Cronenberger attended the 1993 session of the ICCROM Architectural Conservation Course. He lived in the Aventino section of Rome with his wife and young son.